

this body, but there never has been one who cared as much or worked as hard for his home State as TOM DASCHLE. I can list his many and varied accomplishments but I would be here for hours and that would not serve the purpose of this farewell. It was the Greek philosopher Plato who said, "The measure of a man is what he does with power." And it is that test that so clearly shows the character and the humanity and the values of TOM DASCHLE. TOM never used the power that he had attained for self-aggrandizement. He used it to build a better South Dakota, and a stronger America.

He has always realized that our country works best when people have an opportunity to live up to their own potential, when our children are not shackled by poverty and lack of education, when our people who need a helping hand are given one, and when our older Americans are able to live out the balance of their lives with dignity. The truth is, if it weren't for TOM DASCHLE and his untiring work, there are children who would not be educated and families who would not be housed and vulnerable people who would be uncared for.

TOM DASCHLE's priorities and values have been the priorities and values of his strong family and his devout faith.

It was Jesus Christ who said:

Inasmuch as ye have done unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

And no matter what level of accomplishment and power TOM DASCHLE attained, he never forgot the "least of the people" who Christ referenced.

While we will no longer have TOM DASCHLE to lead us in this body, we are both instructed and warmed by the example he gave us during his 26 years in his congressional career. He and his wife Linda have made an extraordinary team and will always be among the closest of friends to my wife Barbara and me. I will never serve with a man I admire more than TOM DASCHLE, and it is with very great sadness that I say goodbye to his presence in this body. But more than anyone I have ever served with, or ever will serve with, he has given glory and meaning to the term "United States Senator."

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALEXANDER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING FOR MEATS AND VEGETABLES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, in recent days there have been news reports about our colleagues on the other side of the Capitol Building deciding that

they would like to get rid of something called country-of-origin labeling for meats and vegetables. This is a law that has been previously enacted by the Congress saying that consumers have a right to know where their meat and vegetables come from. So a Member of the House and the Speaker of the House and the majority leader of the House have indicated they would like to find a way, in these waning days, perhaps in the Omnibus appropriations bill, to repeal the requirement to establish country-of-origin labeling for meat and vegetables.

Country-of-origin labeling is now the law of the land. The Secretary of Agriculture has been dragging her feet for some long while in implementing it. While she was dragging her feet, the Congress decided to extend the time for implementation, so that time was extended over the objection of many of us. My colleagues, Senator DASCHLE, Senator JOHNSON, and many others here in the Chamber objected to that. But, nonetheless, it was done last year in one of these omnibus bills.

If those who are making decisions about what to put in omnibus bills these days decide they want to repeal the country-of-origin labeling law in an omnibus bill this year, they will do a great disservice to American consumers. They will pull the rug out from under farmers and ranchers in our country. Why? Because the fact is, we produce the highest quality food in the world.

Consumers want to know where their food comes from. Almost any consumer in this country can take a look at his or her T-shirt or their shoes, and on the label it will say: Made in the U.S.A. Made in China. You will find out exactly where it was made. We know where shirts come from, and we know where shoes come from because it is all labeled. But meat is not labeled. The law requires it to be, but it is not at this point. So the question is, Will this law remain, and will it, in fact, be implemented, or will it not?

We had a U.S. Department of Agriculture report about the condition of meat that has been imported into this country. And I would like to just show a couple of comments from that report. The report was talking about conditions inside a meatpacking plant in Hermosillo, Mexico. That plant in Mexico supplied raw beef to the American consumers. It had never been inspected and was finally inspected once. Here is what they found. They found:

"Shanks and briskets were contaminated with feces."

A U.S. Department of Agriculture official wrote of his tour of the plant:

"In the refrigerator a disease-condemned carcass was observed ready for boning and distribution in commerce . . . Paint and condensation from dirty surfaces were dripping on the meat."

The official found that workers were literally walking on the beef that was going to be approved for export to the United States. They found that a side

of beef approved for processing was infected with bacterial blood infection.

The problem is not limited to the Mexican plants. This is one plant in Mexico. Incidentally, this plant was shut down, then reopened under another name, and to my knowledge has never again been inspected.

Mr. President, by unanimous consent let me ask to show this piece of beef from a supermarket.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, no one knows where this comes from. No Member of the Senate will know where this originated. Did this come from the Mexican plant I just described? Does it come from a French plant that was also inspected and contaminated? Does this come from one of those plants, or does it come from a domestic source in this country in which inspection, we know, is rigorous? Does it come from a domestic source where we have farmers and ranchers who produce the best supply of meat available in the world? Where does this piece of beef originate? No one knows. Consumers deserve to know. They have a right to know.

The country-of-origin labeling requirement passed by the Congress will give them the opportunity to know, but some of our colleagues around here, hailing the call of the big packing plants and others, decide now they want to try to repeal that. Maybe, just once, this place can stand up on the side of farmers and ranchers and consumers, just once, and ignore the call of the bigger economic interests who say: Let's not do this. We clearly should do this.

Labeling is important. Labeling empowers consumers. Labeling protects American producers who are producing the best quality food at the lowest disposable income of any country in the world. So my message to those who are now sauntering around the Chambers watching this Omnibus appropriations bill be put together is this: It would be a very foolish mistake to believe that the Omnibus appropriations bill should, without any debate, carry a provision that would repeal something Congress has already done that will give people the right to understand where their meat and vegetables come from, where the origination point is for the vegetables and the meat that is being consumed by the American people.

If, in fact, the majority party decides to do this—as I indicated, one Member of the U.S. House especially is proposing it. It has been, it is reported, supported by the Speaker of the House and the majority leader of the House. If they move in this direction, it will be a very serious mistake, in my judgment.

#### INTERNATIONAL TRADE DEFICITS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I would like to, on another subject, speak for just a moment about the area of international trade.